

Columbia TRA

CTRA General Meeting minutes - 14 January 2018

Present from the Committee

1. Kevin McKenna (Chair)
2. Penny Creed (Vice Chair)
3. Jonathan Moberly (Secretary)
4. John Cotter
5. Dave Sinclair
6. Ed Furey (Treasurer)
7. Pam Haluwa
8. Rupsha Begum-Smith

Michaela French, THH ASB enforcement

Cllr John Pierce

Residents:

Ben Schofield, Nazrul Islam, Matt Zeunet(?), Mary Dinneen, Maggie Shea, Dominique Bonarjee, Loraine Reid, John Reid

Agenda

- Apologies
- Previous Minutes
- Tower Hamlets Homes ASB – Michaela French
- Questions to Michaela
- Overview of the LBTH ASB Pilot
- Update from Weavers Community Action Group
 - ASB reporting
 - Recent meeting with Mayor John Biggs
 - The street art campaign and what happened next
- The next WCAG meeting
- Any other business – 10 minutes

2 - Previous Minutes

November agenda action points

- Communications workflow with Boygues has been organised.
- New build design - meet and greet hasn't happened. January?
- Bulk refuse - JP to speak to THH in relation to bulk refuse. TBD. Gascoigne place meeting has not happened but Dunmore point are in discussions with THH CEO Susmita Sen.
- Repairs case study - **JC to contact J Reid - TBD.**
- Football - no more coaches have come forward yet: will be arranging a meeting in February.
- Spitalfields town council proposal - ... consultation now closed. CTRA has submitted a response opposing. Consultation to go to full council.
- Xmas party - There were two events, one in the DCA and one in Dunmore hut, but the CTRA didn't get involved. Funding from THH went to Dunmore Hut Xmas party.
- Goodsyrd consultation has moved to the next stage. CTRA has not commented yet.

3 - TV break to watch the BBC Inside Out documentary on our drugs issues

4 - Michaela French - update from Tower Hamlets Homes ASB enforcement.

Michaela is the THH ASB officer for the area.

- Its important to understand the distinction between THH ASB enforcement and Tower Hamlets Council ASB which is a completely separate entity. There have been significant changes in the latter which should make a difference to us.
- The Council ASB team were under Public Realm, and have now moved across to Community Safety (Director Ann Corbett).
- This should be an opportunity for improved services.
- Previously the council didn't believe it should be involved in drug dealing (as a policing matter). Michaela stressed that in her experience this is not helpful, as much of the issue as it affects the community is the nuisance aspect, which is a civil, not a criminal matter.
- Community Safety now want to duplicate the working practices of THH ASB in the council ASB services.
- Michaela needs support from the council and is optimistic that this will occur.
- Today is switchover day.

Civil vs Criminal offence

- MF has civil powers not criminal powers. Same for the Parkguard officers.
- Civil injunctions are easier to prove than criminal offences. The evidential requirements are lower. Police evidence needs to be beyond reasonable doubt. There is a lower minimum standard for civil.
- enforcement via Park Guard and caretakers patrols.
- If an offender breaks a civil injunction it becomes a criminal offence, and police can arrest on the spot.
- Civil injunction can cover geographical location and other conditions (eg possession of drugs paraphernalia)

Examples

- an offender who has breached a Civil Injunction twice and received a 12 month custodial sentence. This is a rare result - MF had a 'very good judge'
- MF overheard a drug order conversation on a BT Inlink on Bethnal Green Road. She recognised the users from our WhatsApp photos. ParkGuard followed the users, stopped the drug delivery car. Police backup arrived. The addicts gave evidence against the dealer. With MF's evidence the dealer received 4 years 6 months sentence in spite of only having one wrap in possession.

Dip referrals / outreach

- Tower Hamlets is the only borough that gives a Drugs and Alcohol DIP team on-the-spot referral. - TH is well-funded for drug abuse help. THH is focussing on habitual offenders to push towards residential treatment programs.
- Dip appointments are made at Mile End Hospital. [TODO - add that number to our website]

5 - John Pierce - ASB Pilot

- the pace of improvement between has been faster in THH than in the council.
- THH had collapsed in 2015 but had more of an opportunity to recover more quickly, given an extra boost of £1 million. We are now seeing the benefit of that.
- The council is moving much slower but is on a good trajectory and hope that in time it will get better.
- The two-sided approach where ASB was split between community safety and public realm was broken. Now all ASB is under one roof hope there is a great hope this will be resolved..
- The neighbourhood pilot was conceived under the old split/matrix scheme, bringing in a neighbourhood manager to bring people together. Police, housing associations other agencies and the council all need to be brought together.
- John Fortune as neighbourhood manager. He is tasked with a number of things one of which is Schools - what can be done to reduce trouble outside schools. He will have two team members.
- Intervention. - council is changing the team that do that. Council approach will be enhanced with two people to do direct engagement with drug users and also enforcement when engagement fails.
- Need some comms support to tell. you what you need to know. JH keen for engagement event to co-create what that engagement should be. JP suggests that community organises such an event. [TODO - organise co-creation event]

6 - Q & A for Michaela

- **Park Guard** - Is park guard 24/7? - MF: No as only four of them. What they do is determined by daily tasking which depends on issues that have arisen and the ASB cases. Parkguard are not a response service, there is no number to call but are aware of things that are happening eg via WhatsApp.
- **Samantha Lawrence** is now forbidden to enter the borough with powers of arrest on breach.
- **THH / Council co-working** MF will be working more closely with John Fortune, the SNT team and Ann Corbett in future. Is optimistic that this will see a big improvement. Information sharing should be a part of this.

7 - Weavers Community Action Group update

- Reporting. This is essential, please keep reporting and report all incidents. This is needed to keep the agencies engaging with the issue. WhatsApp reporting also enable us to share information amongst ourselves.
- WhatsApp is planned to be set up with the council CCTV control room.
- JM to visit the CCTV control room [TODO - request CCTV camera for Diss St]

8 - Mayoral meeting

- This was useful even just to show the mayor what it is actually like. And the stuff we have been doing. Presented our case and challenged the mayor to take a lead
- Pam - mayor didn't know how his own council is organised.
- ASB pilot, making sure we keep in touch with John Fortune
- new mayoral ASB oversight board. This is an internal group of council officers. Susmita Sen (THH) sits on it as does JP, Asma Begum and John Shapiro .. internal not for public engagement. There have been two meetings so far.
- Action points - [TODO - meeting with John Biggs, John Fortune, comms].

9 - Upcoming meetings

Next Weavers Community Action Group meeting -11 february.

Next CTRA meeting - 14 march. Topic will be housing.

Afternoon meeting Monday 21st at 2pm.